

A Business Owner's Guide to Smokefree Indoor Air Act of Columbus

Dealing with Smoking Customers

Know the Ordinance

- Educate your employees to know the basic facts of the law and how to respond to customers who have questions or refuse to comply.
- Remind customers that compliance is required by law and that the facility owner or operator is liable for violations.

Know How to Talk to Customers

- Always be polite
- Some possible phrases to use with customers who wish to smoke are:
 - "I'm sorry, but you'll have to put out your cigarette or move outside. This is in accordance with Columbus' new smoke-free law."
 - "The law requires that no smoking be allowed in the workplace anywhere in Columbus. We appreciate your cooperation."
- Employees may also be trained to inform customers of the new law upon arrival or when taking the customer's orders. Possible phrases to use are:
 - "I just want to remind everyone that this is now a smoke-free environment in accordance with the new law in Columbus."
 - "I want to thank everyone for not smoking. If you want to smoke, we have a designated area outside for you."

Enforcing the Law

- Each employee should know what he/she is responsible to do to be in compliance with the law. The following reasonable steps can be taken:
 - Politely request that the person smoking refrain from doing so in the restaurant or bar. Offer an outside alternative if available.
 - Unresolved problems should be reported to the owner or manager who has ultimate responsibility. Employees should not be forced to put themselves in any situation that they feel is threatening.
 - Call the Columbus Health Department 724-4AIR (4247).

Other Suggestions

- Provide gum or mints to customers.
- Print small request cards (business card size) to remind patrons of the law and to encourage patrons to stop smoking. Present these to violating customers.
- Have brochures on hand to give to customers who are resistant. These brochures can be obtained from the Columbus Health Department and explain the reason for the law and general information about the ordinance.
- If a patron insists on smoking, remind them of the Act and politely ask them to step outside if they wish to smoke. If the customer is being belligerent or threatens physical harm, you may want to involve the police. Use this solution as a last resort.